

Heavy rain triggers Amber warnings – October 2020

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Heavy and persistent rain will bring a risk of flooding and disruption to parts of the UK this weekend, as Met Office weather warnings cover large parts of the country.

Storm Alex

Storm Alex, a low-pressure system named by Météo-France [earlier this week](#), has brought wet and windy weather to southern parts of England and Wales today (Friday) with a [wind and rain warning](#) in place for this.

Heavy rain and strong winds

Steve Ramsdale, Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office, said: “Storm Alex has clipped the southern edge of Britain today bringing heavy rain and strong winds to the country. The highest gust of 71 mph was at Berry Head on the Devon coast, but winds are now easing for most. Away from the south it is a more pleasant day, with light winds and bright spells for much of northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

“However, as the strong winds and rain associated with Storm Alex clear away from Britain later tonight, another low-pressure system will move towards the UK from the east bringing further very heavy rain to many over the weekend as well as some strong winds.”

National Severe Weather Warning

Deputy Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office, Laura Ellam, said: “Saturday will be a very wet and cold day for many as heavy bands of rain push north and west across the country, becoming slow moving for some parts. We have issued several [Yellow rain warnings](#) covering large parts of the country over the weekend, with [Amber rain warnings](#) in place in eastern Scotland, much of Wales and parts of west England. Conditions will improve for many on Sunday though it is still likely to remain wet and windy for some.”

Weather impacts

Laura continued: “At this time of year, trees are in full leaf and drains can become blocked from tree debris – with many places seeing 25–50mm of rain and around 70–90mm over high ground, there is a heightened risk of flooding and very difficult driving conditions this weekend. In areas with Amber warnings, such as Snowdonia, Exmoor and eastern Scotland, over 100mm of rain could fall over the weekend – this is likely to lead to significant impacts from flooding.”

“Given the severe weather this weekend, the Met Office is urging people to keep a close eye on the forecast and warnings during this spell of challenging and disruptive weather.”

Environment Agency

Carol Holt, Flood Duty Manager at the Environment Agency, said: “Widespread and persistent heavy rain is likely to lead to flooding for some areas over the weekend. Flooding is also possible in parts of southern England today.

“Environment Agency teams have been working hard to clear grills and weed screens in areas which may be affected. We urge people to stay away from swollen rivers and not to drive through flood water – it is often deeper than it looks and just 30cm of flowing water is enough to float your car.

Be vigilant

“You can check your flood risk, sign up for free flood warnings and keep up to date with the latest situation at <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk>, call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency on Twitter for the latest flood updates.”

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Marc Becker, Flood Duty Manager at Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) said: “SEPA has issued a number of Flood Alerts and people should prepare for the potential flooding of infrastructure and significant transport disruption. We expect parts of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Angus to be the worst affected – and property flooding is possible in several areas. More details of areas affected will be included in Flood Warnings as they are issued in response to river levels.

“Whilst the worst impacts are expected in the North East, a much wider area covering much of the East of Scotland could also experience flooding impacts due to the heavy rain over the weekend. People living, working and travelling in affected areas are advised to plan ahead, ensure they have signed up to Floodline and are prepared to take action.

Flood risk and road conditions

RAC Breakdown spokesperson Rod Dennis said: “Heavy rain will make road conditions miserable if not downright dangerous for drivers this weekend, and they’ll need to be prepared for an ugly mix of surface spray, gusty winds and more than likely some disruption on the roads.

“Floods are also a possibility so drivers should remember never to attempt to drive through water unless they know for sure that it’s shallow enough. For drivers who are unlucky enough to breakdown in the horrid conditions, our patrols will be working around the clock to get them moving again.”

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